



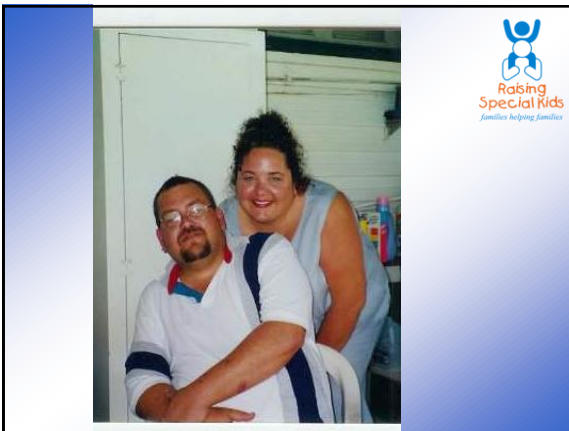
Supporting families of children with disabilities or special needs in Arizona

Getting And Keeping Your First Job









What are we going to talk about?

1. Straight talk about employment
2. What you need to know about employment
3. Accommodations, disclosure, and interviewing
4. The employer's perspective
5. Self-employment
6. Closing thoughts, questions, and evaluations



“Every youth has some skill that, if nurtured, will provide them the opportunity to make money for the rest of their life.”

Larry Korterling



A Look At Employment

- People with disabilities are 2.5 times more likely to be unemployed or underemployed than people without disabilities
- Work experience in school, postsecondary education, and families involved with their youth help youth be successful



Why Is Work Important?

Why Is Work Important?



Work provides:

- A feeling of worth by contributing to society
- Meaningful days
- A place to learn social skills and responsibility
- A way to combat isolation, loneliness, and depression
- A role in the adult world
- Others?

Youth with Disabilities and Employment: What We See Today



- Youth unable to find or keep jobs
- Jobs that don't meet strengths or interests
- Youth staying at home waiting for "services" to find them a job
- Youth not willing to disclose a disability



Today's Labor Market



- Strong competition for entry-level jobs
- Employees expected to be cross-trained
- Summer months especially competitive
- Interpersonal skills highly valued

What You Need to Know

- Self-awareness
- Career planning
- Role of families
- Building a resume
- Disclosure and job accommodations
- Interview tips
- Self-employment
- Other nuggets




It All Begins with Self-awareness




- Many youth don't know what their disability is, or haven't practiced telling others about it.
- It is crucial that youth know how their disability affects them in school and on the job.



Career Planning

Before youth begin looking for a job, ask:

- "What is your dream job?"
- "What do you need to know to do that job?"
- "What classes in school can help you learn the skills you need?"
- "Do you like to work inside or outside?"
- "Do you have good times of the day and bad?"



Why Career Planning?



- Helps avoid poor job matches
- Helps improve transition or employment plans such as the Individualized Education Program (IEP)
- Helps youth begin thinking about work in productive way
- Helps youth see a realistic, step-by-step plan to reach long-term career goals

How Families Can Help



Positive family involvement with youth leads to employment and academic success.

How to help:

- Identify strengths of youth
- Catch early signs of problems at work
- Work on "soft skills" at home
- **Maintain High Expectations of Youth**

Using Personal Networks



- Relationships, not want ads, provide the most job opportunities.
- Everyone has a network within the community they can use.
- Use your network to find opportunities.
- Tell service providers, such as Vocational Rehabilitation, about them.
- How did you find your first job?

The Resume



- Do we expect youth with disabilities to follow the same process as others to find employment?
- Every job seeker needs a resume.
- Be creative about what's listed. Paid employment is not the only example of work experience and skills.

Volunteering



Use volunteer experiences to build work skills and improve a resume.

- Volunteering is not a long-term solution to paid employment
- Volunteering shows employers that youth want to work despite lack of paid employment
- Try several experiences so youth can explore different types of jobs

Job Accommodations



- Allow person to perform "essential functions" of a given job
- Are usually inexpensive and simple to put in place
- Can lead to a positive experience for youth
- Identifying potential accommodations
- Can be used to demonstrate initiative to employers when youth know what they need



Job Accommodation Network (JAN)



- Use fact sheets and accommodation examples from JAN during interview process.
- JAN includes helpful information for employers about complying with a law called the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

www.jan.wvu.edu

Disability Disclosure



- It may be necessary for a youth to disclose a disability during the interview process
- It's only necessary if accommodation is needed
- Disclosure is a personal choice
- Youth should practice answering interview questions, including questions that are illegal to ask
- Resources include: 411 On Disability Disclosure (NCWD-Youth)

http://www.ncwd-youth.info/resources_&_Publications/411.html

The Interview



- Practice the basics
- Never stress the disability, only strengths
- Avoid giving too much information
- Coach young person on responses to disability-related questions
- Know that although they may be allowed to participate, parents or service providers have no legal right to take part in the interview



The Employer's Perspective



Employers are looking for :

- A good attitude about working
- Honesty
- Punctuality
- Good communication skills
- Reliability
- Appropriate behavior
- Willingness to learn new things

Self-employment



Many people with disabilities choose to start their own small business. A small business:

- Allows people to use their true talent or passion
- Allows friends and family to help
- Is an excellent option for rural areas
- Can be planned with help from programs through Vocational Rehabilitation and Social Security (PASS Plans)
- Requires a viable business plan

Keeping the Job



Teach youth to:

- Show up
- Take direction and work well with others
- Be flexible



Families Can:

- Build support system at work
- Communicate regularly with employer and service staff
- Know that sometimes it just doesn't work and that's OK

Additional Advice



- Practice filling out job applications
- Plan for transportation
- Consider disability management
- Encourage postsecondary education

Remember, the first job should not be the last job.
Never stop expecting great things!

Mission Statement



To support and encourage families on the challenging journey of raising children with disabilities and special health needs.

We do this so families can maximize their abilities to successfully navigate through today's world.



Our Services



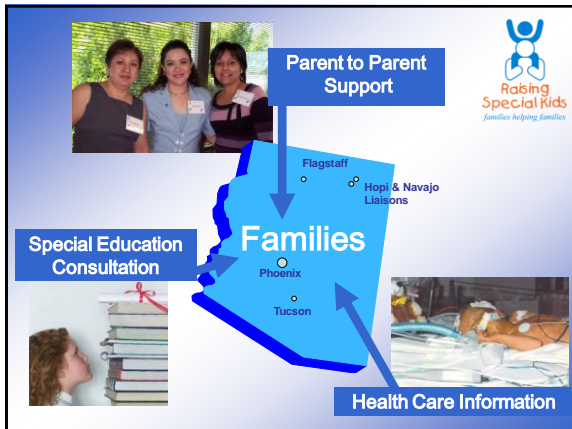
- Are **no cost** to families
- Available in English and Spanish
- Support families of diverse culture, structure and background



Comprehensive Family Resource Center



- Serving all of Arizona with staff in Phoenix, Flagstaff, and Tucson,
- 501(c)(3) Nonprofit organization
- Founded in 1979
- Staffed by family members of children with disabilities and special health needs





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